

#LessIsMoreNY

Less Mass Supervision = More Safety and Justice



In the face of COVID-19, New York Must Decarcerate NOW. It is Time to Fully Implement #LessIsMoreNY

On September 17, 2021, New York's Governor Kathy Hochul signed the Less is More: Community Supervision Revocation Reform Act (S.1144A – Benjamin / A.5576A – Forrest) into law and immediately implemented certain provisions, paving the way for the release of hundreds of individuals detained in jails and prisons across the state for non-criminal offenses.

As one of the lead groups in the #LessIsMoreNY campaign, we urge the full implementation of the Less Is More Act now to address myriad harms of mass incarceration throughout the state at a time of acute crisis.

New York has been hit hard by COVID-19. But few places have been hit harder than jails and prisons statewide. People held in prisons and jails are 5 times more likely to contract and die from Covid-19. Testing in correctional facilities is limited, but as of December 13, 2021, there have been 37 confirmed COVID related deaths of incarcerated people and 9,704 confirmed cases of incarcerated individuals contracting COVID-19 in New York's Correctional facilities. And people in prisons and jails are already dying of the virus.

The first two COVID-19 related deaths at Rikers Island were of individuals incarcerated solely for technical violations of parole. New York imprisons more people for non-criminal “technical” violations of parole like missing an appointment with a parole officer, being late for curfew, or testing positive for alcohol and other drugs than every other state in the country. Today, there are over 5,000 people incarcerated in local jails and state prisons for technical violations of parole.

The racial disparities are stark: Black and Latinx people are incarcerated for technical violations of parole at higher rates than white people. For instance, at Rikers, Black people are incarcerated for technical violations of parole at 12 times the rate of whites. In State prisons, Black people are incarcerated for technical violations at 5 times the rates of whites.

This costs taxpayers more than half a billion a year. Reincarcerating thousands of people every year – mostly Black and Latinx people – for technical violations of parole costs New York State more than \$350 million a year, and counties \$300 million per year.

New York can save lives and decarcerate right now by implementing the #LessIsMoreNY Act ([S.1144A](#) – Benjamin/ [A.5576A](#) – Forrest). Full implementation of the #LessIsMoreNY Act would end this cycle of incarceration for simple technical violations of parole – and decarcerate thousands in the state as a humanitarian crisis unfolds on Rikers Islands jail complex and prisons and jails throughout the state. The #LessIsMoreNY Act has [broad support](#) from community groups, law enforcement, city and county officials, and more, who agree that these reforms will enhance public safety and increase the likelihood of successful re-entry. Implementing #LessIsMoreNY will immediately begin saving the state and counties roughly \$700 million a year by limiting the use of incarceration for technical violations. These savings can then be reinvested into the communities most harmed by mass incarceration and who are currently facing disproportionate harm and death due to COVID-19.

Take Action to Fully Implement #LessIsMoreNY

Contact Gov. Kathleen Hochul today: https://www.lessismoreny.org/sign_lessismoreny_now
For more information, and to get involved with the Less Is More campaign, visit our website at www.LessIsMoreNY.org or follow the #LessIsMoreNY hashtag on twitter; or contact:

Katal Center for Health, Equity, and Justice, info@katalcenter.org | 646.875.8822

A Little Piece of Light, dhynton@alittlepieceoflight.org | 347.773 8050

Unchained, emily@weareunchained.org | 315.243.5135

[Citations available upon request.]